

**SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS  
OF A SURVEY OF ACQUISITION COMMUNITY INDIVIDUALS  
ACQUISITION REFORM ACCELERATION DAY  
31 MAY 1996**

The following is a summary and analysis of feedback obtained from individuals in the Department of Navy acquisition community who participated in Acquisition Reform Acceleration Day, 31 May 1996. There were **8516 individual surveys returned** over the six-week period following Acceleration Day. This represents a 20.8% response rate.<sup>1</sup> More than three-fourths of the 41,000 Acceleration Day participants are in Field organizations.

*Q1: In the last two years, how much improvement have you seen in the acquisition process?*

There were 1019 respondees from Headquarters (inside beltway) organizations. On a forced 1-5 Likert Preference Scale with "1" meaning NONE and "5" meaning A LOT, there is a normal distribution curve with a standard deviation of 1.016 (see Figure 2-1). The mean is 2.796; both the mode and median are 3. There were seven "write-ins" at "0". **This response demonstrates strong agreement (89.6% of Headquarters respondees) that there has been improvement of the acquisition process.** Of this group, the largest segment (46.1%) falls at the mid-level point.

There were 7277 respondees from Field (outside beltway) organizations. Distribution is skewed to the left (see Figure 2-2), with a 2.515 mean, standard deviation of .999, and mode and mean of 3. There were eight "write-ins" at "0". **This response demonstrates agreement (82.4% of Field respondees) that there has been improvement of the acquisition process.** Even though the largest segment of this group (45.8%) falls at the mid-level point, a large grouping (36.5%) falls at "2", indicating SOME or A LITTLE improvement.

Though there is general agreement across the DoN acquisition community that improvement is occurring, this data indicates **perception of improvement in the Field organizations is lagging behind perception of improvement in the Headquarters organizations.**

*Q2. From your personal experience, how much are teams improving the acquisition process?*

There were 1011 respondees from Headquarters organizations. There is a normal distribution curve with a standard deviation of 1.066 (see Figure 2-3). The mean is 2.897; both the mode and median are 3. There were six "write-ins" at "0". **This response demonstrates strong agreement (89.5%) that teams are improving the acquisition process.** Of this group, the largest segment (41.1%) falls at the mid-level point. However, there are significant groups at the "4" level (27.7%) indicating QUITE A BIT and at the "2" level (25.6%) indicating SOME or A LITTLE. This distribution accounts for the higher mean level of Q2 response compared to Q1

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<sup>1</sup>The 20.8% response rate achieved through this survey process falls on the normal response curve developed from commercial surveys. The lower the response rate, the higher the possibility of non-response error (the differences of perceptions between the response group and the non-response group). However, (1) low response rate does not automatically mean that there has been a response error and (2) a non-response error is only a problem when a difference between the respondents and the non-respondents leads to an incorrect conclusion or decision. Employees in two categories are apt to be among the first group to respond: (1) employees who have gripes and (2) employees more interested in how the organization works and believing in the possibility of change. This second group can make the biggest difference in the organization.

response.

There were 7202 respondents from Field (outside beltway) organizations. Distribution is skewed to the left (see Figure 2-4), with a 2.528 mean, and standard deviation of 1.043 and mode and mean of 3. There were twelve “write-ins” at “0”. **This response demonstrates agreement (80.8% of Field respondents) that teams are improving the acquisition process.** Even though the largest segment of this group (44.7%) falls at the mid-level point, a large grouping (34.6%) falls at “2”, indicating SOME or A LITTLE improvement.

Though there is general agreement across the DoN acquisition community that teams are improving the acquisition process, this data indicates **perception of the amount of improvement in the Field organizations is lagging behind perception of the amount of improvement in the Headquarters organizations.**

*Q3. Do you feel you have management support and encouragement to take prudent risks to improve acquisition performance?*

There were 897 respondents from Headquarters organizations, answering this dichotomous question with 741 (82.6%) “yes” and 148 (16.5%) “no” responses. Eight respondents wrote-in a “don’t know” or “not applicable” response. There were 7289 respondents from Field organizations with 4275 (58.7%) “yes” and 2993 (41.06%) “no” responses. Twenty-one respondents wrote-in a “don’t know” or “not applicable” response. See Figure 2-5.

**This positive response demonstrates strong agreement in the Headquarters organization and agreement in the Field organization that there is management support and encouragement to take prudent risks to improve acquisition performance.** As in the response to Q1 and Q2, the Field is lagging behind Headquarters in the perception that there is management support and encouragement to take prudent risks. This issue is being addressed in a Strategic Plan Working Group under the ASN(RDA) Strategic Plan Workforce Goal and is an initiative in the DoN Acquisition Reform Management Action Plan.

*Q4. What do you see as the major barrier in improving the acquisition process?*

There were 6773 barriers identified. These have been categorized and weighted in Section 4. Figure 2-6 contains a Pareto analysis of these categories. **The top barrier identified (16.5% of responses) is resistance to change, followed by Policy, Legislation, Regulations (13.6%) and Education and Training (8.3%).** Other barriers identified include: Funding Issues (5.7%), Management (5.6%), Contracting Process (5.5%) Acquisition Processes (5.0%), Manpower Issues (5.0%), Government/Congress (4.6%), Amount of Red Tape (3.9%), Teams (3.2%), Communications (3.2%), Time (3.0%), Organizational Politics (2.9%) and Empowerment (2.9%). Refer to Section 4 for additional information.

*Q5. Name one new idea that would improve the DON acquisition process in your area of work?*

There were 5450 recommendations for change. These have been categorized and weighted in Section 5. Figure 2-7 contains a Pareto analysis of these categories. **The top area (11.1%) for recommendations for change is Education and Training, followed by Contracting Process (10.3%) and Credit Card Purchases (7.1%).** Other recommendations are in the areas of Acquisition Processes (6.5%), Information Technology (6.3%), Manpower Issues (6.0%), Empowerment (5.9%), Funding Issues (5.4%), Teams (5.0%), Policy, Legislation, Regulations (4.8%), Government (3.5%), and Communications (3.4%). Refer to Section 5 for additional information.